

Usher Ministry Work Instructions

Dress Code: Men - Jacket and Tie, Women - Equivalent attire. If you are a last minute stand in, don't worry about dress code. It is better to have a full crew than a spiffy looking partial crew.

The goal of the usher ministry is to assist the priest by helping to ensure that the mass will run smoothly. If those in attendance feel welcomed and hear the words of God, they will come back again. Let's do our part.

Ushers must be part of the welcome committee. Everyone who enters the sanctuary must be greeted with a **smile** and warm welcome. Welcome committee members can't greet everyone. They may be involved with new registrations and can't greet all who enter. The ushers on the other hand, can greet all. If 400 people enter the door, all need to be welcomed. 400 people and 4 ushers means each usher has 100 greeting to extend to our fellow worshipers. Don't let anyone get past you without a welcome. Because of this need, **USHERS MUST ARRIVE 20 TO 30 MINUTES BEFORE MASS STARTS.**

Prior to Mass Preparation

Sign in at the Sacristy Room.

Determine if there are one or two collections. Second collection list is on bulletin board in sacristy room. You can also review the envelopes all registered members get in the mail. Insure there are sufficient baskets available. You will need two cloth lined baskets and two purple baskets per usher taking up the collections. If there is a large crowd in the far right wing, that usher will need 6 baskets.

Determine if there is a baptism and if so, find out how many family members and reserve seats at both the rear and front of the church as needed. Talk to Deacon Dave or the sacristan for advice.

Assign a minimum of two personnel to hand out song sheets and welcome people to our church (and SMILE). Open up all four doors to the church. **If the Music ministry isn't singing and the noise in the narthex gets loud, please close the doors and allow those in the sanctuary to pray without distractions.**

If anyone asks, get them a large print book found on the collection table.

If no family signed up on the offertory sheet (found on the counter in the narthex) Find a family to bring the Eucharistic Hosts, Wine and Collection Forward. Brief them on their duties and advise them to meet you at the table in the rear of the sanctuary at the end of the collections process. If there are two collections, look for a family with at least two children. **Try to find families that aren't involved in church activities on a regular basis.**

If anyone is in a wheelchair or needs additional space, you can remove a chair to make room. Replace the chair at the end of the mass. A wheelchair is available in the ministry room. Father Dan has requested that we leave permanent space in the front row for an extra wide wheelchair. We have a regular attendee in a wheelchair at the noon mass that needs this extra space.

If asked, remember that we have a nursery available.

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At the start of the mass.

Close the doors to the church when Father has moved into the worship space. You can allow people to enter as long as they go either to the left or right.

When the announcements start, please hold people from entering the worship space until Father is at least half way down the center aisle.

Assist people in finding seats. If a family with small children wants to wait in the narthex, then ask if they would like chairs. Return chairs at the end of the mass.

Count the total number of people potentially taking the Eucharist (those above 8 years of age). Provide this information on a sheet of paper and place it in the sacristy room for the sacristan.

During Mass

Watch and assist the congregation. Encourage people to not exit and return into the worship space during the gospel readings. **Don't seat anyone during the gospel readings.**

During the prayers to the faithful secure all collection baskets. At the end of the prayers and while the congregation is being seated, all four ushers will move down their respective rows to the head of the aisle. Bow in unison and then initiate the collection. Start with the main collections using a cloth lined basket. Start this in the first applicable row. Use a second cloth lined basket and count back 6 more rows and start a second basket moving around. If there is a second collection, return to the first applicable row and start a purple basket moving around, try to allow for the first basket to have gone at least through the first two to three rows to provide some separation. If there are people sitting in the far right wing (from the back of the church) you may wish to go down the aisle between the two right wings and use 3/6 baskets as needed.

Once all baskets are filled, place the primary collection in one large cloth basket and pull the draw string. Place the secondary collection in another large basket and pull the draw string. Do this on the collections table. While one usher is doing this, insure another usher is preparing the family bringing forth the collection. Insure the child or person carrying the collection knows to place the collection on the ground in front of the altar, or in front of the flowers or other seasonal display. Make sure they remember to bow together prior to departing.

On the collection, use common sense on counting back rows. If there is one collection an alternative method is just to start the collection down the first row and third row and alternate all the way to the back. You stay close to the point of the collection process and can easily skip a row if no one is present. The key is we need to speed up this process and be professional in its undertaking. Also, if the family you chose only has one child, take the second collection cloth and place it inside the first collection basket on top of the closed up cloth from the first collection. This consolidates the collections but keeps them separate.

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At almost every mass someone comes up afterward with an envelope that they forgot to add to the collection. Just add this to the basket when practicable at the end of mass.

The usher crew must also assist the congregation during communion. At a point where the Eucharistic Ministers are receiving communion, all four ushers should move down the aisles together, bow and wait for the Eucharistic ministers to move forward. Insure that anyone disabled in your area is seen first by the Eucharistic minister, or if they are at the rear of the church, insure they are served at the end of communion. Once your section is complete, check the other sections to see if we can direct people from a large section to a smaller section.

End of Mass

Mass isn't over until after the final blessing. Don't get bulletins or open doors until the mass is over.

Leave the doors closed until Father is halfway down the aisle, although assist personnel trying to leave in front of him.

Two personnel need to secure bulletins and pass these out to the congregation. As the bulletins are handed out, **Don't forget to tell them to have a good week.** Bulletins are usually found in a box in the safe room. Extras are found in the information centers on both sides of the Narthex.

Two personnel need to secure the collection(s) and follow the deposit procedures to place the receipts into the safe. Insure each collection is placed in a separate plastic bag. Insure the collection form is filled out, signed and dated. Insure the plastic bag is filled out with the mass time, date, and two signatures. If you are without another qualified person or workings with a family member, get a parish officer to assist you.

Clean up after mass. Collect song sheets and place large print books back on the collections table. Since the 12:00 noon mass is the last of the weekend, you can discard the song sheets in the trash. They will not be reused. Left over bulletins can be placed in the pamphlet racks on the information centers, Insure the collections baskets are placed neatly on the table and complete a final sweep of the church.

Have a nice week.